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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 6149
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 5378
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 3907
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 6194
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 3005
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1212
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RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 7422
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 2388
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 6420
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 8464
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 1247
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 1913
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
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UNCLAS TEL AVIV 000941

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR X0XX
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL
PARIS ALSO FOR POL
ROME FOR MFO

SIPDIS
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

Please note: There will be no Israel Media Reaction on Wednesday,
April 29, Israeli Independence Day Holiday.

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

Mideast

Key stories in the media:

All media highlighted events and issues related to Memorial Day and
Independence Day. The media quoted President Shimon Peres as saying
at a Memorial Day ceremony yesterday that Israel wants peace but is
ready for war. IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi said:

"The IDF is committed to saving human life, and our enemies take advantage of our high morals when firing at us from within centers of civilian population." PM Benjamin Netanyahu earlier urged the country to maintain the unity it feels during Memorial Day every day of the year. DM Ehud Barak was quoted as saying in an interview with HaQaretz that there is no existential threat to Israel. QNo one will dare try to annihilate Israel,Q he said. Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that yesterday, during a press conference, Barak hinted that Israel should develop defense systems that will allow it to give up land.

The Jerusalem Post, Maariv, and Israel Hayom quoted senior Israeli officials as saying yesterday that they were "concerned" at the prospect that the U.S. may approve funding for a Palestinian Authority government that includes Hamas. HaQaretz reported that Israel was QsurprisedQ by the report. The concern arose after it became known that the Obama administration had asked Congress for minor changes in U.S. law that would allow the continued provision of funds to the PA even if Hamas officials became part of a Palestinian unity government.

Israel Radio reported that Netanyahu will not meet with PA President Mahmoud Abbas before his visit to Washington. The media continued to report on the dispute between Israel and the PA on the issue of the recognition of Israel as a Jewish state. Israel Radio quoted a senior PA source as saying that Mahmoud Abbas had presented former President Bush with the written draft of a peace plan with Israel, to which previous PM Ehud Olmert never replied in writing -Q he started the military operation in Gaza soon after. Israel Radio quoted the PA newspaper Al-Ayyam as saying that American officials will inspect new Israeli construction plans around MaQaleh Adumim. The Palestinian daily cited a senior official in the American Consulate-General in Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Post reported that U.S. Senator Joseph Lieberman (ID-CT) told the newspaper yesterday that any engagement with Iran must come with Qnot just carrots and sticksQ and that he is introducing legislation to deliver just that.

The Jerusalem Post and Makor Rishon-Hatzofe quoted DM Barak as saying yesterday that the Syrian-Turkish maneuvers constitute a Qworrisome development.Q The Jerusalem Post reported that a senior Israeli strategic analyst told the daily yesterday that the drill not only disturbed Jerusalem, but that it has also riled the Turkish military. Israel Radio quoted Syrian President Bashar Assad as saying in the London-based Ash Sharq Al-Awsat that his country was closer to reaching peace with OlmertQs government than with Ehud BarakQs in 1990.

Media reported that Kadima MK Tzachi Hanegbi will retain his position as chairman of the KnessetQs Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee despite being in the opposition.

HaQaretz reported that yesterday two former Border Police officers were sentenced to several years in prison for their role in killing a Palestinian teen in Hebron in 2002.

The Jerusalem Post reported that members of the Foreign Press Association in Israel are complaining of harassment and discrimination at Israeli airports and other locations.

The Jerusalem Post reported that a new movement to unite trade unions and other NGOs from Australia, Europe, and North America working against boycotts of Israel -- Trade Unions Linking Israel and Palestine (Tulip) -- began operation last week.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Palestinians in a refugee camp near Bethlehem that Pope Benedict XVI will visit next month want him to get a close-up look at the security barrier.

HaQaretz reported that several days ago 10 people from southern Sudan boarded a plane at Ben-Gurion Airport bound for an African country, from which they would continue toward Sudan. The daily quoted the Foreign Ministry as saying that the refugees were repatriated out of their own free will. However, southern Sudanese community leaders in Israel said that the move endangered the refugeesQ lives and criticized the QInternational Christian Embassy Jerusalem,Q which supported the action.

HaQaretz reported that the only state-run Jewish-Arab school in Israel (in Jaffa) might close down. While the Tel Aviv Municipality cited the departure of Jews from Jaffa, the school claimed that the municipality was drying it up.

The media reported that a second traveler was quarantined after his return from Mexico, to which health officials urge Israelis to avoid travel.

Mideast:

Summary:

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized: QOn Independence Day, we belabor the obvious: The State of Israel was established to fulfill dreams, not to arm itself ahead of the coming of the Messiah.

Editor-in-Chief David Horovitz wrote on page one of the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post: QNetanyahu will tell Obama next month that, in an improved climate... he's prepared for far-reaching concessions, though not as dramatic as previous governments have entertained.

The nationalist, Orthodox Makor Rishon-Hatzofe editorialized: QAbu Mazen, the Palestinian Authority's moderate figure, has just rejected Netanyahu's demand that he recognize Israel as a Jewish state.

Block Quotes:

I. "Israel Time, 5769 [2009]"

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (4/28): QLast year, Israel marked its 60th anniversary with great pomp. Perhaps now the time is ripe to let go of the euphoria over the country's very existence, the flip side of existential fear.... Israel is not the only party responsible for its anomalous situation. Not only are enemies near and far who question the state's legitimacy not dissipating with the passage of time, they're becoming stronger. But the answer does not lie in entrenchment and a contrarian approach to the whole world, but rather the opposite: remobilization of the same creative energies that drew Israel admiration in its early years. Unfortunately, however, stagnation has taken the place of change when it comes to matters within our control as well. The new government is not only not heralding change and hope; it is calling for steps backward -- in its approach to both Israel's Arabs and to our neighbors and the world. Those who have embraced Qconflict managementQ and have despaired of a solution, and those for whom governing is an end in itself rather than a means for change and improvement, will find themselves marking time and treading water with us all, driven by crises instead of growing and renewing. On Independence Day, we belabor the obvious: The State of Israel was established to fulfill dreams, not to arm itself ahead of the coming of the Messiah.

II. "Netanyahu's Bid to Change"

Editor-in-Chief David Horovitz wrote on page one of the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (4/28): QNetanyahu will tell Obama next month that, in an improved climate, with the Iranian threat defused and Palestinian readiness for reconciliation encouraged by an improved economy, he's prepared for far-reaching concessions, though not as dramatic as previous governments have entertained. He'll stress that Israel has no desire to govern the Palestinians, and make plain that his reservations about Palestinian statehood are practical, not ideological. He'll also doubtless indicate to Obama his conviction that diplomacy isn't going to work with Tehran -- that stringent economic sanctions, and the threat of worse, hold the key. His overall message won over the Israeli public, just about. Obama is going to be a much tougher sell.

III. "The World Has Not Yet Accepted Israel's Essence"

The nationalist, Orthodox Makor Rishon-Hatzofe editorialized (4/28):
QAbu Mazen, the Palestinian AuthorityQs moderate figure, has just
rejected NetanyahuQs demand that he recognize Israel as a Jewish
state.... In plain words, [Abu Mazen wants] two states for two
peoples: an Arab-Palestinian one and another common one for Jews and
Arabs. IsraelQs 61 years, its enormous successes, its great
humanitarian enterprise in absorbing, the admiration it has earned
around the world and the very fact of its being the realization of
biblical prophecies in which billions believe, have not been enough
to grant it the simple legitimacy enjoyed by other nations. The
Durban II conference -Q the world hypocrisy conference Q- in which
the worldQs greatest oppressors of human rights took place, debated
IsraelQs very existence.... If anyone celebrating IsraelQs
independence has any doubt about the historic, dramatic significance
of the realization of the Zionist vision, it is enough to look at
the way the world still does not accept the simple point carried by
these words: a Jewish state.

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